

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

A water service line connects your home to the utility main. Prior to 1955, these service lines were often made of lead.

These lead service lines are a health concern because they can leach lead into your drinking water. Lead can cause a variety of adverse health effects when ingested or inhaled which may include delays in physical and mental development in babies and young children; deficits in attention span, hearing and learning abilities of children; and, increases in the blood pressure of some adults.

Lead is naturally occurring and everyone is exposed to "background levels" of lead given its widespread distribution. The EPA reports that lead paint and contaminated dust and soil are the leading household sources of lead exposure; and also estimates that 10 – 20 percent of lead exposure in small children may come from lead leaching into their drinking water.

The amount of lead in drinking water is typically very low. Water in streams and lakes is essentially lead-free and drinking water treatment and distribution does not typically add lead to drinking water. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of lead leaching from material containing lead.

Lead service lines are generally a dull gray color and are very soft. You can identify them easily by carefully scratching with a key. If the pipe is made of lead, the area you've scratched will turn a bright silver color.

Do not use a knife or other sharp instrument and take care not to cut or puncture a hole in the pipe.

Note: Galvanized piping can also be dull gray in color. A strong magnet will typically cling to galvanized pipes, but will not cling to lead pipes.



Lead service lines can be connected to the residential plumbing using solder and have a characteristic solder "bulb" at the end, a compression fitting, or other connector made of galvanized iron or brass/bronze.

Sources of Lead in Drinking Water:

- Lead pipes
- Faucets or fittings made of brass
- Copper pipes with lead solder

If your home has a lead service line, it is likely that other sources of lead exist in the home as well.

If you suspect your home has a lead service line, hire a licensed plumber to inspect your pipes or have water samples from your home analyzed for lead by a certified laboratory.